

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please add or amend the claims to read as follows, and cancel without prejudice or disclaimer to resubmission in a divisional or continuation application claims indicated as cancelled:

1-16. (cancelled)

17. (currently amended). A method comprising,

in an open-architecture system for queue management of customers at an enterprise:

at an automated receptionist, accepting identification information from a plurality of customers waiting in multiple queues, the customers waiting to meet with an agent, and printing tickets for the customers;

interacting with a plurality of agents each providing service to a customer via a plurality of agent workstations within an enterprise, the interaction with the agent via a browser on the agent workstation;

at an announcer server:

automatically calling a customer by activating a unit selected from the group consisting of: a display and a speaker; and

providing customer wait information to a plurality of customers for each of a plurality of queues, the wait information comprising a list of waiting customers;

at a central server for the enterprise:

communicating via a network with the announcer server, automated receptionist and agent workstations, the communication across the enterprise, in a hardware independent manner;

recording information received at the receptionist and the plurality of agent workstations in a database;

interacting with the agents via a browser on the agent workstation;

notifying a customer via the unit activated by the announcer server that an agent is ready for the customer; and

accepting customer information from the automated receptionist, communicating preexisting customer appointment information to a customer via the receptionist, and if, based on the customer identification information, a database indicates a customer owes money to the enterprise, directing the customer to a specific queue.

18. (previously presented) The method according to claim 17, wherein the ticket includes personal information.

19. (previously presented) The method according to claim 17, comprising at the automated receptionist displaying personal information on a screen.

20. (previously presented) The method according to claim 17, comprising printing with the ticket forms to be filled out based on the customer identification.

21. (previously presented) The method according to claim 17, comprising printing with the ticket marketing information based on the customer identification.

22. (currently amended). An open-architecture system for queue management of customers at an enterprise, said system comprising:

an automated receptionist to accept identification information from a plurality of customers waiting in multiple queues, the customers waiting to meet with agents, and to print tickets for the customers;

a plurality of agent workstations within an enterprise each to interact with an agent providing a service to a customer, the interaction with the agent via a browser on the agent workstation;

an announcer server to automatically call a customer and to provide customer wait information to a plurality of customers for each of a plurality of queues, the wait information

comprising a list of waiting customers, the announcer server for activating a unit selected from the group consisting of: a display and a speaker;

a central server for the enterprise comprising:

a database to record information received at the receptionist and the plurality of agent workstations; and

a web-based server to interact with the agents via the browser on the agent workstation;

wherein the central server is to:

communicate via a network with the announcer server, automated receptionist and agent workstations, the communication across the enterprise, in a hardware independent manner;

accept customer information from the automated receptionist, communicate preexisting customer appointment information to a customer via the receptionist, and if based on the customer identification information, a database indicates a customer owes money to the enterprise, direct the customer to a specific queue; and

notify a customer via the unit activated by the announcer server that an agent is ready for the customer.

23. (previously presented) The system according to claim 22, wherein the ticket includes personal information.

24. (previously presented) The system according to claim 22, wherein the automated receptionist comprises a screen to display personal information.

25. (previously presented) The system according to claim 22, wherein the system prints with the ticket forms to be filled out based on the customer identification.

26. (previously presented) The system according to claim 22, wherein the system prints with the ticket marketing information based on the customer identification.

27. (currently amended). A method comprising,
in an open-architecture system for queue management of customers at an enterprise:

at an automated receptionist, accepting identification information from a plurality of customers waiting in multiple queues, the customers waiting to meet with an agent, and printing tickets for the customers;

interacting with a plurality of agents each providing service to a customer via a plurality of agent workstations within an enterprise, the interaction with the agent via a browser on the agent workstation, marking a customer as abandoned, and placing via the agent workstation a customer marked abandoned in a queue to wait to meet with an agent;

at an announcer server:

automatically calling a customer by activating a unit selected from the group consisting of: a display and a speaker; and

providing customer wait information to a plurality of customers for each of a plurality of queues, the wait information comprising a list of waiting customers;

at a central server for the enterprise:

communicating via a network with the announcer server, automated receptionist and agent workstations, the communication across the enterprise, in a hardware independent manner;

recording information received at the receptionist and the plurality of agent workstations in a database;

interacting with the agents via a browser on the agent workstation;

notifying a customer via the unit activated by the announcer server that an agent is ready for the customer; and

accepting customer information from the automated receptionist, and communicating preexisting customer appointment information to a customer via the receptionist.

28. (previously presented) The method according to claim 27, wherein the ticket includes personal information.

29. (previously presented) The method according to claim 27, comprising printing with the ticket forms to be filled out based on the customer identification.

30. (previously presented) The method according to claim 27, comprising printing with the ticket marketing information based on the customer identification.

31. (previously presented) The method according to claim 27, comprising accepting at the agent workstation information that a customer was served without being called from a queue and reporting information regarding the serving of the customer to the central server.

32. (currently amended). An open-architecture system for queue management of customers at an enterprise, said system comprising:

an automated receptionist to accept identification information a plurality of customers waiting in multiple queues, the customers waiting to meet with agents, and to print tickets for the customers;

a plurality of agent workstations within an enterprise each to interact with an agent providing a service to a customer, the interaction with the agent via a browser on the agent workstation, the agent workstation to mark a customer as abandoned, and to place a customer marked abandoned in a queue to wait to meet with an agent;

an announcer server to automatically call a customer and to provide customer wait information to a plurality of customers for each of a plurality of queues, the wait information comprising a list of waiting customers, the announcer server for activating a unit selected from the group consisting of: a display and a speaker;

a central server for the enterprise comprising:

a database to record information received at the receptionist and the plurality of agent workstations; and

a web-based server to interact with the agents via the browser on the agent workstation;

wherein the central server is to:

communicate via a network with the announcer server, automated receptionist and agent workstations, the communication across the enterprise, in a hardware independent manner;

accept customer information from the automated receptionist; and

notify a customer via the unit activated by the announcer server that an agent is ready for the customer.

33. (previously presented) The system according to claim 32, wherein the ticket includes personal information.

34. (previously presented) The system according to claim 32, wherein the system prints with the ticket forms to be filled out based on the customer identification.

35. (previously presented) The system according to claim 32, wherein the system prints with the ticket marketing information based on the customer identification.

36. (previously presented) The system according to claim 32, wherein the agent workstation is to accept from an agent information that a customer was served without being called from a queue and report information regarding the serving of the customer to the central server.

37. (currently amended). A method comprising,
in an open-architecture system for queue management of customers at an enterprise:

at an automated receptionist, accepting identification information from a plurality of customers waiting in multiple queues, the customers waiting to meet with an agent, and printing tickets for the customers;

interacting with a plurality of agents each providing service to a customer via a plurality of agent workstations within an enterprise, the interaction with the agent via a browser on the agent workstation, transferring a customer into a queue and placing the customer on hold, the customer to be called back at a later time;

at an announcer server:

automatically calling a customer by activating a unit selected from the group consisting of: a display and a speaker; and

providing customer wait information to a plurality of customers for each of a plurality of queues, the wait information comprising a list of waiting customers;

at a central server for the enterprise:

communicating via a network with the announcer server, automated receptionist and agent workstations, the communication across the enterprise, in a hardware independent manner;

recording information received at the receptionist and the plurality of agent workstations in a database;

interacting with the agents via a browser on the agent workstation;

notifying a customer via the unit activated by the announcer server that an agent is ready for the customer; and

accepting customer information from the automated receptionist, and communicating preexisting customer appointment information to a customer via the receptionist.

38. (previously presented) The method according to claim 37, wherein the ticket includes personal information.

39. (previously presented) The method according to claim 37, comprising printing with the

ticket forms to be filled out based on the customer identification.

40. (previously presented) The method according to claim 37, comprising printing with the ticket marketing information based on the customer identification.

41. (previously presented) The method according to claim 37, comprising accepting at the agent workstation information that a customer was served without being called from a queue and reporting information regarding the serving of the customer to the central server.

42. (currently amended). An open-architecture system for queue management of customers at an enterprise, said system comprising:

an automated receptionist to accept identification information from a plurality of customers waiting in multiple queues, the customers waiting to meet with an agent, and to print a tickets for the customer;

a plurality of agent workstations within an enterprise each to interact with an agent providing a service to a customer, the interaction with the agent via a browser on the agent workstation, the agent workstation to transfer a customer into a queue and to place the customer on hold, the customer to be called back at a later time;

an announcer server to automatically call a customer and to provide customer wait information to a plurality of customers for each of a plurality of queues, the wait information comprising a list of waiting customers, the announcer server for activating a unit selected from the group consisting of: a display and a speaker;

a central server for the enterprise comprising:

a database to record information received at the receptionist and the plurality of agent workstations; and

a web-based server to interact with the agents via the browser on the agent workstation;

wherein the central server is to:

communicate via a network with the announcer server, automated receptionist and agent workstations, the communication across the enterprise, in a hardware independent manner;

accept customer information from the automated receptionist; and

notify a customer via the unit activated by the announcer server that an agent is ready for the customer.

43. (previously presented) The system according to claim 42, wherein the ticket includes personal information.

44. (previously presented) The system according to claim 42, wherein the system prints with the ticket forms to be filled out based on the customer identification.

45. (previously presented) The system according to claim 42, wherein the system prints with the ticket marketing information based on the customer identification.

46. (previously presented) The system according to claim 42, wherein the agent workstation is to accept from an agent information that a customer was served without being called from a queue and report information regarding the serving of the customer to the central server.